

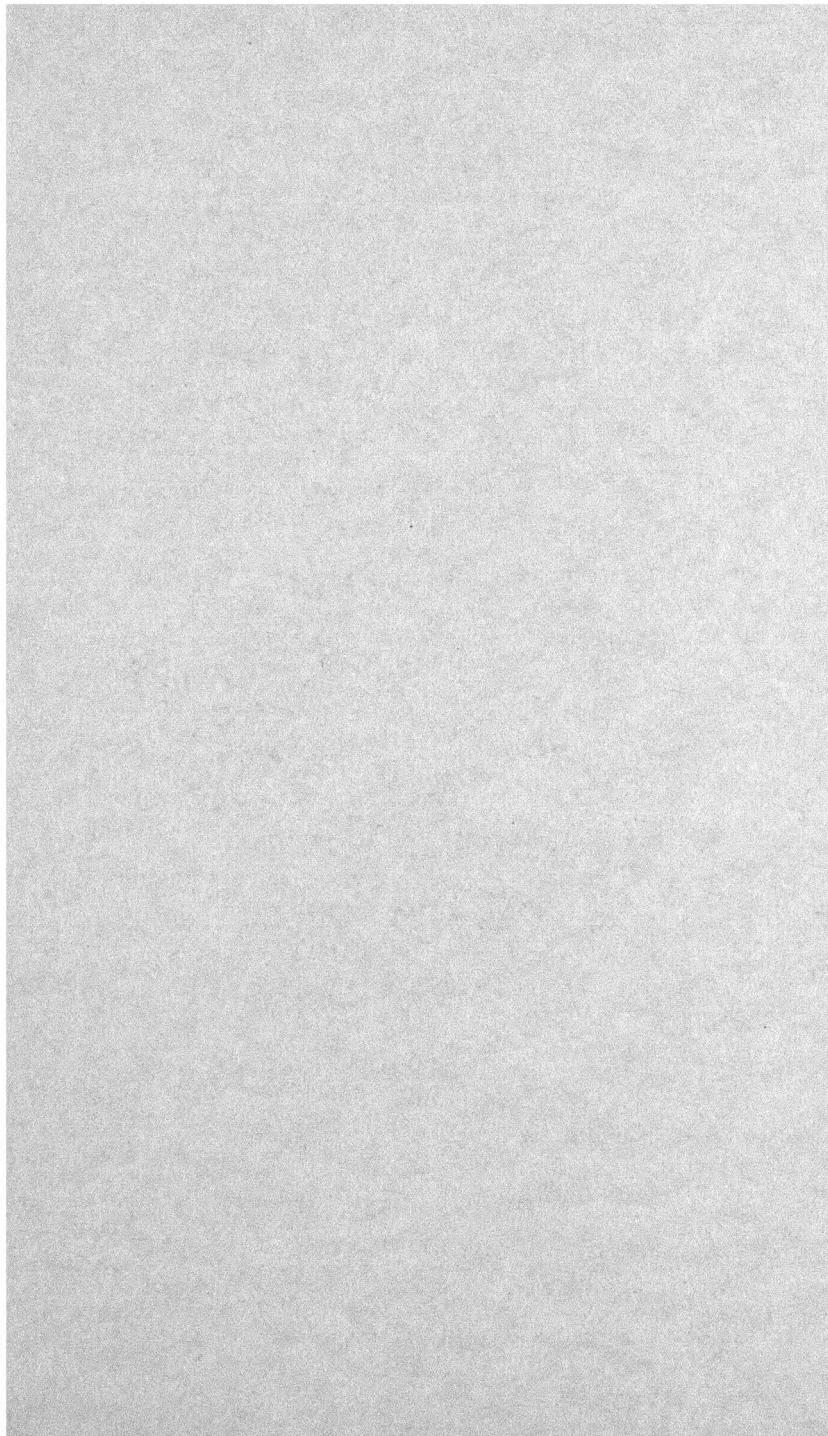
A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE LIFE

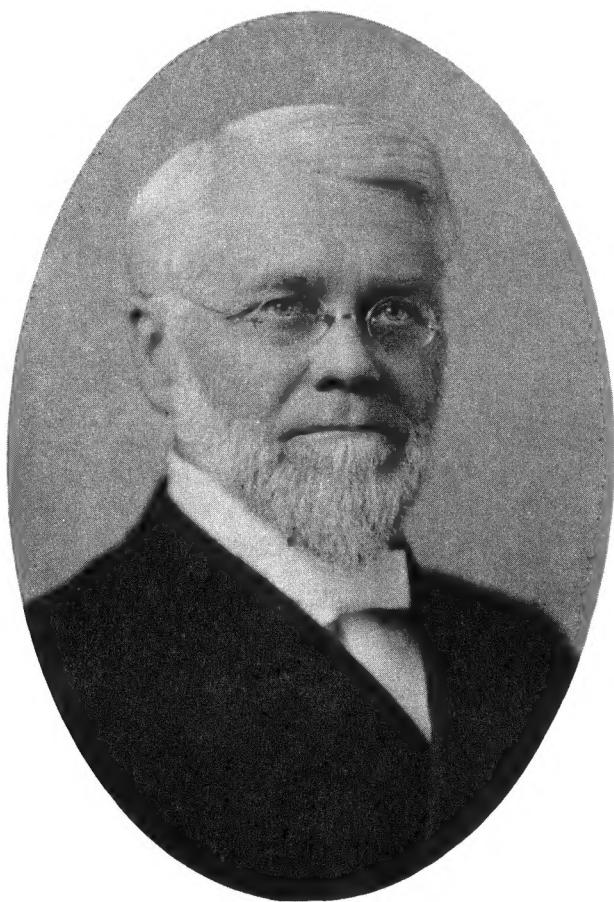
OF THE

REV. FREDERIC B. DUVAL, D.D.

PASTOR KNOX CHURCH
WINNIPEG

AND MODERATOR OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
IN CANADA





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BY

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Life and Light

"The life was the light of men." John i., 4.

O Thou, the only holy life,
Ordained the light of men to be,
I turn from all my mental strife,
And pray Thee to enlighten me.

2

Through all the avenues of earth
My soul has wandered in its quest
Of lasting good, but finds a dearth,
And meekly turns to Thee for rest.

3

There is a spirit all men feel,
A mystic form they could not trace,
A kinship needful to their weal
That lingered long with veiled face,—

4

This heavenly kinship, gracious Lord,
In Thy pure life, I fain would see;
This hidden glory, long adored,
Thou dost in love reveal to me.

5

It lights the way to life divine,
And strength affords to walk therein;
It upward draws to love like Thine,
And purifies the heart from sin.

6

With sorrow for the worthless past,
I turn repentant toward Thy way;
With chastened hope of peace at last,
I'll walk with Thee, my light and stay.

—Frederic B. DuVal.

Biographical Sketch

For nearly twenty-one years, the Rev. Dr. DuVal has been the minister of Knox Presbyterian Church, Winnipeg. This city is the commercial, educational and political capital of Western Canada; and Knox is the cathedral church of the portion of the Dominion in which it is located. It is, with one exception, the oldest Presbyterian church in the country, the wealthiest and most influential. In its philanthropic work it has sought to set a mark for other Presbyterian churches in the West.

On his arrival in the city of Winnipeg, in the spring of 1888, Dr. DuVal immediately assumed a prominent position, both by reason of the position to which he had been called and his own great gifts and endowments. His ability in public address was immediately recognized. It was also at once apparent that he was a man of sound judgment, of unselfish spirit, of the highest purpose, of extensive learning, sympathetic and kind at heart. Such was the opinion formed of him twenty-one years ago by the most cultured people of the city, and in the period which has since passed he has risen steadily in the esteem and regard of the members of his congregation and of the general public. In all matters relating to the administration of the Church in Canada his judgment is received with the deepest respect.

During the entire period of his pastorate in Winnipeg he has been a leader in every good cause, and prominent in all matters relating to the public welfare. His appeal for conformity to a higher standard in public and private life has been constant and unwavering. In all his work he has had the cordial support of his congregation, and he has won a large circle of devoted friends. He has occupied many positions of trust, responsibility and honor, and his election in 1908 to the position of Moderator was universally recognized

as a fitting tribute to the value of his services to the city and country in which he lives.

He is appointed to address the Pan-Presbyterian Council in New York on Home Missions in Canada, and later he will represent the Presbyterian Church in Canada at the ceremonies connected with the observance of the four hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Calvin, in Geneva.

A native of Maryland, of Huguenot and Scotch origin, Dr. DuVal was graduated from Princeton College in 1872, in the honor-roll of his class, with gold medals for oratory and debate, and First Prize for Bible Scholarship, on examination in a four years lecture course by President McCosh.

Before graduating from the Theological Seminary in 1875, he received a call to three pulpits. Settling in the First Presbyterian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, he soon won, as newspaper references of the time indicate, "golden opinions as a preacher and pastor, showing great depth of thought, which marks him as an able minister and one destined to take high rank among Presbyterian divines."

From Guyot he had caught the idea that the glory of God was seen best in the perfection of human character. This set the key-note of his life. All the grace of God, all truth written and unwritten, were concentrated here. As the Presbyterian Encyclopedia of the time said: "He wove truth into the warp and woof of practical life."

In addition to his congregational work in Wilmington, he was manager of the "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty," and instituted a lectureship in Medico-Morals, for the instruction of young men in self-preservation—all of this giving him wide influence on the city's weal.

After declining earlier calls, to Boston and San Jose, California, finally, with the deep love of his people and the reputation of being "a ripe scholar, a diligent student, earnest and indefatigable in his work," he accepted a call to Toledo, Ohio. The printed sermons and lectures which appeared in the press of Toledo, Columbus and Cleveland indicate a greatly increasing strength. The local circumstances, materialistic indifference, leading to a disregard of the spiritual springs of greatness fired the Huguenot blood. "Making Haste to be Rich,"

"A Nation's Duty," and "The Purpose of the Sabbath," are some of the subjects the treatment of which seemed to go to the heart of human well-being. The press of Columbus spoke of his address to a thousand representatives of the State Y.M.C.A. Convention as "holding the audience spellbound for an hour and a half." The Cleveland press, the following year, upon a similar occasion, characterized him as "a wonderful man, a finished and powerful speaker."

Eleven years after his ordination, the University of Wooster, in recognition and congratulation of his "studious habits, scholarly attainments, and distinguished success in his chosen work," conferred upon him, while still minister of Toledo, the degree of Doctor of Divinity. At this time the Canadian Northwest was beginning to discover its resources, and to feel its way into the doubtful problems of Empire building. It was looking for men of energy, with prophetic insight and force of character, to guide its affairs. The Rev. Dr. Daniel M. Gordon, now Principal of Queen's University, having resigned the charge of Knox Church, Winnipeg, Dr. DuVal was called to succeed. From the many columns of references in the press to his departure from Toledo, the final sentence is quoted:—"The cause of Christianity in Toledo loses one of its strongest supporters in the departure of Dr. DuVal, but this is at least measurably compensated for by the reflection that he goes to a field of greater usefulness, one where it is believed greater good can be accomplished."

His reception in Winnipeg, the capital of North-West British America, was all that a generous people could make it or a generous heart could expect. He met hard problems from the beginning, and the spirit in which he faced them can be best learned from the press report of the first meeting of the St. Andrew's Society, which he addressed:—"His speech breathed forth the very genius of pioneerhood, and he showed conclusively that it required an American to come and point out that Winnipeg was the geographical centre of North America." His prophecies on that occasion have been more than fulfilled.

During the years which have since passed, Dr. DuVal has encountered the problems incidental to the up-building of a

new country. The features of strength which were manifest in the bud in earlier years here grew into power; and evidences of his Christocentric thought during this period will be read in the following lines on the Advent (Gal. iv., 4-5):

The Redeeming Lord

The world had long in darkness lain;
It struggled with itself in vain
 To find the way to light.
Great souls seemed bound in mystic shrouds;
Their cherished hopes were dreams and clouds;
 Their dwelling was the night.
Philosophy had bowed its head;
Its vision sometimes caught the dread
 Of darkness more profound.
But some pure souls saw, through the night,
The halo of a distant light,
 That gave to hope a ground.

He came, Himself the Father's dower,
With full authority and power
To break the oppressor's rod.
He came the Spirit to impart,
To purify, enrich the heart,
And make us sons of God.
With joy let all His advent sing,
And let the heavens with echoes ring
To our redeeming Lord.
Yea, let His name, o'er land and sea,
By every tribe and kindred, be
Eternally adored.

With the duties of preacher and pastor, he has been compelled to unite the spirit of the publicist. The well-being of the people for time and eternity has been ever before his mind. As member of the Board of Manitoba College, and the Council of the University; as the examiner of ministerial candidates and the chairman of the Citizens' Committee on Morals he has been put to the front in public questions, in the pulpit and on the platform. His discussion of the relation of Church and State to public education in 1891 forms a part of the volume of the history of the abolition of separate schools in Manitoba. His address on the constitutionality of Prohibition before the Prohibition Convention, in 1894, laid down the principle that in the development of the British Constitution from the reign of Henry II., "the people had been increasingly looked upon as a power, capable, through their representatives, of making and unmaking, according to the general rights of mankind, and the original compact of society." And again, that "the struggling mind and heart of our race has brought triumphantly to the top this great principle, 'The good of the people is the supreme law.'" The positions he took in respect to the Colonial and Provincial rights of British subjects were, a few years later, fully sustained by the Privy Council. In 1902, when the country feared that the Government was insincere in its relation to the temperance legislation that had been approved by the Privy Council, in the presence of an audience of anxious citizens that packed the Parliament House. Dr. DuVal, representing the ministers and the temperance people of the Province, made to the Government what was universally judged the strongest speech ever delivered in the Legislative Hall. Upon questions of Moral Prophylaxis he is looked upon as authority. In the Montreal press, during the debates in the General Assembly of 1907, he was spoken of as "the Nestor from Winnipeg."

The crowning feature of his life, so far, was the spirit in which he was called to the Moderator's chair in the General Assembly, and the manner in which he fills it. With reference to his nomination to this high office, the editor of the Presbyterian wrote:—"Presbytery after presbytery" (more than half in the whole Church, including one in the Foreign Mission

Field) "proposed his name for the highest office in the Church's gift." His choice, therefore, upon the motion of Dr. Bryce, seconded by Judge Forbes, was by acclamation.

His welcome to the Assembly was in the following lines:

Welcome to the General Assembly

From where the Atlantic's raucle roar
 Breaks on its bold, resisting shore,
 To where Pacific's milder wave
 The mountain's base doth gently lave;
 From prairie, hill and valley green,
 Across the great lake's silver sheen,
 You come, once sons of prince and thrall,
 But now the sons of freemen all.

You gather to the middle west,
 The heart of Canada, the blest;
 The land by God's good bounty fed
 Upon the sweetest of His bread;
 The land that never will deny
 To toiling hands a full supply,
 Nor from their children e'er remove
 The fondest hopes of home and love.

You gather in the month of June,
 When flowers bloom and birds attune
 Their friendly voices to prolong
 Their gratitude in summer song;
 When generous sun and kindly rain
 Make bright and fertile our domain,
 Inspiring men with tempered cheer
 Until the harvest doth appear.

You, chosen men with high intent,
 To counsel for the Churches sent,
 We welcome with an open door,
 And on you blessings rich implore;
 That through your wisdom, faith and love,
 And gracious favor from above,
 The Church may strive with heart and hand
 To plant the Cross in every land

His conduct of the Assembly was characterized by the leading members as that of a "master—skilful, urbane and kindly : with unfailing ability to get the correct view-point of every question in debate, with happy self-repression, sustained day after day, with an even princely dignity." Apparently, according to the critics, his discharge of the duties of this high office was without a flaw, so that he was termed the "Model Moderator." Of his work at this meeting of the Assembly, Professor Cappon, the literary critic of Queen's University, wrote in the Quarterly : "Throughout the proceedings, the personality of the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. DuVal, of Winnipeg, was felt, controlling procedure and discussion in a decisive and pleasantly firm way. Possessed of a clear, resonant voice, and an emphatic manner of speech, he interposed, from time to time, very effectively, when the limits of debate or the procedure threatened to range out of order, but always with perfect fairness to all sides. A quick, acute, logical mind, which could define the disputed rights of an amendment to an amendment of an amendment, without a moment's hesitation, and with all the lucidity the case was capable of receiving."

At this meeting of the Assembly, Dr. DuVal was appointed to represent the Presbyterian Church in Canada at the Tercentenary celebration of the founding of Canada, in Quebec. On this occasion, in an informal address to Earl Grey, he said : "In the name of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, I congratulate your Excellency upon the enlightened statesmanship that did not allow this occasion to appear as a mere Church parade, a Quebec demonstration, nor even a Dominion celebration ; but that you have given it, as it deserved, an imperial dignity and an international importance that will exercise an influence on the spirit of international law. Who can look through this great gateway to the Atlantic and think of the conflicts that raged beyond the Atlantic, without concluding that the Almighty opened it as a means of escape for humanity into a betterment of life." After replying, His Excellency expressed a wish that Dr. DuVal should make a statement, personally, to Lord Roberts, of the thoughts and ideas which he had just expressed to him.

The sermon of the Moderator, given at Quebec, was re-

ceived with the highest commendation and praise for its subject matter, its aptness and its spirit. The editor of the Quebec Chronicle stated it to be "the finest discourse he had ever heard." In all the subsequent functions, as Moderator, Dr. DuVal has fully maintained the dignity of his high office. At the late induction of the Principal of Knox College, the Toronto press stated: "Dr. DuVal thrilled the audience in an address on the duty of Knox College towards the young men who are preparing for the ministry."

Ever keeping to the fore his idea that all truth is to be made tributary to the perfection of man, he pointed the pathway through the gradation of the sciences up to theology; through Nature up to Nature's help and saving grace.

He lives with the age. As it was said on the reception of his second degree of Doctor of Divinity in Toronto: "He unites the spirit of science and philosophy, the spirit of the theologian and the statesman, with poetic fervor, in the preacher and prophet."

From his sermon on the occasion of the Tercentenary special services in Quebec we quote the close:—

"The highest ideals for common weal must be maintained. All low party spirit that seeks by cunning ways to gain its own and not its country's good, must be frowned upon. All mock patriotism, that Johnson saw could become 'the last refuge of a scoundrel,' all talk of dying for one's country while fattening on its commissariat, must be met with contempt. The proof of love is seen in sacrifice. To live nobly is to attain the greatest wealth. This truth is regnant in the Government of God. No other law secures good government to men. Across the altar of whole sacrifice De Monts, Champlain, Montcalm and Wolfe reached the niche of fame, and now sleep well, beneath the garland memories of a grateful people's love.

Fathers, in your business; mothers, in your homes; teachers, in your halls; statesmen, in your Parliaments; ministers of grace, in your pulpits—you are weaving the character of the future. Go down from this Mount of Privilege with hearts full-set to weave it well; not only for self-preservation, but to bear the strain of coming international obligations. Canada and the United States hold this side of

the ocean that washes the shores of the strongest peoples of Asia. When the world meant the discovered parts of Europe, Asia and Africa, the little Mediterranean was the sea of power. In the course of Providence, it yielded to the Atlantic. So will the Atlantic yield to the Pacific, and the powers adjacent will be called to settle its problems. Problems great will require a great people to solve. In the light of this future, it is painful to witness in the United States and Canada the waste of material, intellectual and moral resource, that will be needed in the future to measure up against world powers.

"But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak." Shall we not catch the self-sacrificing spirit of the fathers, whose deeds we celebrate, to maintain the heritage bequeathed to us, for human good? We stand on vantage ground of sacred memories. Around these walls and over these elevated plains there have been contests in other days; but now garlands of honor to the heroic virtues of the contestants intertwine upon their common monument, and the perfume of their blended memories to-day is grateful to their common posterity. No more humanizing impulse could have been given to the spirit of international law; no more delicate tint to the glory of the reign of Victoria the Good; no better guard of strength to the reign of Edward the Seventh; no surer seal to the wisdom of the governmental policy of Great Britain; nothing more in harmony with the aim of Christian civilization. And I bless the Providence of God that enables these words to be uttered by one in whose veins mingles the blood of both the powers that contested the dominion of this continent. As in the rolling of a river the rougher rocks are smoothed, so in the stream of time the asperities of men are worn away. The Scottish clans that once with claymores clove each other's skulls, now stand shoulder to shoulder in defence of common good. So it is for the lasting glory of our institutions that different nationalities, blending here under the same flag, can follow the leading of God for the common good of man.

"May this significant gathering in Quebec prove to be the seal and security of the fact that the settlement effected here

was a forward movement of Divine Providence towards the highest well-being of the race.

"As a nation we are only beginning life, and need to pray

O God, who through the struggles past
 Didst faithful fathers lead aright,
 With Thy full panoply and power,
 Arm us, their children, for the fight.

For now life's battle we begin;
 Our youth, unused to conflict sore,
 Aspires great victories to win,
 As did the Saints in days of yore.

Teach us the pure alone are strong;
 That sons of virtue are a tower;
 That right must ever conquer wrong;
 Before the holy, sin must cower.

Then fill us with courageous grace,
 And rev'rence for our Rock of Might;
 That one a thousand foes may chase,
 And two ten thousand put to flight.

So let the Ark of God arise;
 The holy standard forward move;
 With souls exultant to the skies
 The children will their valiance prove.

Till o'er the world, by God's right hand,
 His kingdom shall established be;
 His saving love rule every land,
 And breathe its peace on every sea



Out of many poetic productions we have taken the following as exhibiting the development of the philosophic tendencies of Dr. DuVal's mind:—

To A Lady

(To a lady who bitterly complained of the injustice and cruelty of God for taking away a little friend, on whom she had spent much time, money and complacent love.)

Come, bear with me until a long-tried parent's heart,
From which have fallen drops of blood in sacrifice,
Attempts to teach thee some divine philosophy.
The single human form I love and that loves me,
Is not the greatest thought in this vast universe;
E'en human love can reach beyond the personal.
The Spartan mother to her best loved son could say,
As he went forth, his country's honor to defend;
If thou return at all, behind the victor's shield
Stand thou, or on it let them bear thy body, brave
In death, unto thy mother's loving heart and home.
And she will bless the gods, that such a son was born
Of her, as did not love this mortal life so well,
As to withhold it from his country's altar dear.

* * * *

The spirit of the patriot this, you say. But learn,
There is a love far wider, deeper still than this;
A love that fits the need of this wide universe;
That does not stay itself upon a single heart,
Nor bound its sacrifice with any nation's pride.
God loved the World, and gave for it His only Son,
Eternally beloved. And yet you hard complain
Of justice here outraged, because a little flower,
That rested on thy bosom love, was snatched away.
I know you not, except as from your bleeding pen,
Your thoughts lie scattered on the painful page;
But there you speak of interests none in this wide world,
Apart from those that centred in one little life.
Would'st thou in passion break e'en Nature's seemly mould,
In which the Spartan mother's noble heart was cast?
Re-write the Gospel: tell all men the earth abroad
That God so loved His only Son that He could not,
In justice give Him up to save a dying world?

* * * *

In this perversion of the truth, your love, you'll see,
Is strangely out of harmony with love divine.
You almost deem God cruel in the course He takes,
To widen, deepen and enrich the soul of man.
The Master asks no more of thee than of Himself.

By way of Golgotha the throne of love is reached.
 Except a grain of wheat fall in the ground and die,
 It bides alone—and this your grief, your sad complaint—
 "Since she is gone, I no one love, and none loves me."
 Dear soul, learn this, th' unloving heart can ne'er be blessed;
 Because 'tis not at one with God, whose love ens swathes
 The world, and causes sun to rise and rain to fall
 Upon the just and unjust lots of men, that both
 The evil and the good, from fountains fathomless,
 May drink the good of God that leads men to repent.
 Into this ocean breadth and depth of love divine,
 Away from self and selfish love, the Lord of life
 Is leading thee to taste a sweetness else unknown.
 The bitter comes before the sweet in life and death.
 The sweat for bread we pay, and blood for character.

* * * * *

'Tis hard, I know, to pay the price of excellence.
 So feels the sullen child at school, but mother love
 Will hold it to the trial, hard though it may be,
 Until the furnace fines the mind from baser dross,
 And lifts her cherished image into dignity.
 How else can such a child be weaned from childish things?
 Love hath its school and discipline no less than intellect,
 And we should magnify the parent love of God,
 That cuts our childish ties from mere complacent things,
 To educate the soul in what is best,
 That we may clothe ourselves in character divine.
 So only can we walk with God, full-robed in white;
 For none together walk except they do agree.
 And hitherto your love, unlike His love, has been
 A mere delight in something unpleasant to your taste.

* * * * *

But God so loved the world, unlovely in its sin,
 And gave His Son, the Loved, the unlovely to redeem.
 The test of love divine is seen in sacrifice;
 No other test than this befits humanity.
 This lesson deep, the harder learned in later life,
 The faithful Father yet must teach His suffering child,
 That she may perfect be in love, that casts out fear,
 Of which you sore complain as clouding everything.

* * * * *

Then bow thy head, dear soul, in sweet humility,
 And learn the lesson here thy Father has to teach.
 Go forth of self, the spirit of the Christ imbibe,
 Who thought equality with God no prize to be retained
 Compared with lowly service in a suffering world.
 The Father therefore Him exalted high,
 That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
 In loving adoration all the world around.
 Go forth with Christ to humbly serve each suffering heart,
 And this will light to life, and love and joy impart.
 So lifted up above the childhood of your race,
 You shall, through suffering, fruits of love divine embrace.

As indicative of his sympathy with nature, a short poem, written during a trip to the Pacific Coast, is quoted. Feeling that we can only express what we experience, he placed himself on an exposed rock, jutting into the ocean, at Point Lobos, California, until a raging storm passed into a calm, and under the impression wrote these lines:—

To The Ocean

Roll on, old ocean, roll!
Thy waves' majestic power,
In this dark threatening hour,
Makes all the land to cower
Before thy rage.

Roll on, old ocean, roll!
But I'll not fear to stand
Upon this rock-ribbed land,
Upon this trembling strand,
And hear thy roar.

Roll on, old ocean, roll!
A power far more renowned
Hath set for thee thy bound,
And compassed thee around
With bars and doors.

Roll on, old ocean, roll!
The continents, thy cage,
Through all the hoary age,
Have curbed thy passion's rage,
Roar on, roar on.

Roll on, old ocean, roll!
I'll listen on thy verge;
There's music in thy surge,
A deeply solemn dirge,
Eternity.

More gently, ocean, roll!
The storm is passing by;
The Lord of sea and sky,
In majesty draws nigh,
Now softly roll.

With reverence, ocean, roll!
A voice comes from above,
The voice of peace and love;
'Tis softer than the dove,
Now cease thy roll.

